



Memorandum

Date: December 3, 2013
To: Joint Stewardship Board, Red Hill Valley
From: Sheri Longboat, Coordinator, Joint Stewardship Board
Subject: **Summary of Board Visit to Red Hill Valley**

On November 27th, 2013, Joint Stewardship Board members Aaron Detlor, Andrew Grice, Brian Doolittle, Guy Paparella, and Rob Norman; Architect Scott Robinson; and Board coordinator Sheri Longboat visited sites along the Red Hill Valley Trail:

- Mud Street site location for the Environmental Interpretive Centre,
- The Bear Meeting place (completed in November 2013),
- Proposed site for the Eel Meeting Place design, and
- Proposed site for the Turtle design.

The afternoon provided an opportunity for the Board to experience the Valley trail and to inspect and discuss key sites that would support decision-making around the interpretive centre, meeting places and the overall trail system.

- The Board concurred that the **Mud Street site identified by the Environmental Interpretive Centre Site Assessment** in November was the most appropriate location. The decision was further strengthened following Board discussion at the Red Hill Bowl site (Eel meeting place). At the Eel location, site weaknesses identified during the Assessment around the lack of a treed area and potential conflict with existing recreational land use (three baseball diamonds), were echoed by the Board.
- The Board was pleased with **the Bear meeting place**; the design blended with the Valley landscape, and appeared to offer opportunities for siting, gathering and resting, and overall, supported the Joint Stewardship Board Vision by facilitating a deeper connection to the cultural landscape of the Red Hill Valley.
- There was also discussion about **signage at the Bear**. Currently, there is no sign in the Bear design to communicate its significance to the public. The Red Hill Valley sign frame that marks the nearby trail intersection is void of the sign/map and members suggested the sign be updated. There was also consensus that a second sign should be located at the Bear. Options for the most appropriate sign would need to be investigated. Three general sign types were discussed:

- A flat sign on the ground was seen least favorable since it could be potentially snow covered most of the winter months.
 - The monument stone/pillar style was discussed for its benefits, but limitations were noted in terms of the amount of information it could communicate – something that is important to the Board.
 - A third option was to look at a more conventional interpretive sign such as those found in other city areas. This type could include a map, design image, description and link to the web site. It might incorporate construction with rock materials. It was noted that methods to protect signs from vandalism (e.g., protective plastic covering) were available.
- The Board also visited the **proposed site for construction of the Eel** (on the south face of the embankment at the Red Hill Bowl). Here the Board discussed appropriateness of the location for the Eel design, and opportunities and limitations of the site for the Environmental Interpretive Centre.
 - At the **proposed area for the Turtle** the Board considered recommendations from the City of Hamilton Landscape Architectural Services at the November 21st Joint Stewardship Board meeting to 1) relocate the Turtle from the lower slope (adjacent to the bridge) to the top of the restored landfill, and 2) scale down from the 40 meter size in the concept design. The Board agreed by consensus the top of the hill for the turtle location, and the size be scaled as guided by the redesign around a snapping turtle.